

CLAIMS

The following listing of claims lists all of the pending claims, and supersedes all prior listings, and versions, of claims in this application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1-2. Cancelled.

3. (Previously presented) The electronic settlement apparatus according to claim 22, wherein said memory stores user identification data that identifies the user to which said discount points are assigned to be associated with said discount points, and a password associated with the said user identification data; and said processor obtains information and password representing said user; determines whether or not said memory stores said user identification data that identifies the user represented by said obtained information and said obtained password to be associated with each other; and stops obtaining said commodity data or said user point data when determining that said memory stores neither user identification data nor said password to be associated with each other.

4. (Previously presented) The electronic settlement apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said processor obtains information, which is supplied from an external device that is remote from the processor and which represents the user, in accordance with an instruction supplied from the external device, and generates said user identification data that identifies the user represented by obtained information and said password associated with the said user identification data, and store said user identification data and password in said memory.

5. (Previously presented) The electronic settlement apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said memory stores user information unique to the user identified by said corresponding user identification data to be associated with said user identification data.

6. (Previously presented) The electronic settlement apparatus according to claim 5, wherein when said processor determines that said user identification data that identifies the user represented

by said information obtained by the processor and said password obtained by the processor are stored in said memory to be associated with each other, said processor updates said user information stored in said memory to be associated with the said user identification data to user information supplied from the external device.

7. (Previously presented) The electronic settlement apparatus according to claim 22, wherein when said processor determines whether or not said settlement data is supplied to the processor until a predetermined time has elapsed after obtaining commodity data, and when said processor determines that no settlement data is supplied thereto, said processor abandons the obtained corresponding commodity data.

8. (Previously presented) The electronic settlement apparatus according to claim 22, further comprising a settlement server, wherein said settlement server stores settlement points representing a property value to be associated with identification data unique to the said settlement points; determines whether or not said processor obtains said commodity data and use point data that designates an amount to be appropriate for the price of said commodity; obtains said identification data from an external device remote from the settlement server when it is determined that said processor obtains said commodity data and said use point data; decides that a difference between an amount of settlement points corresponding to the price of said commodity represented by said commodity data and an amount of settlement points corresponding to the discount points represented by said use point data is appropriate for the price of the said commodity, each settlement point representing a property value; and supplies said settlement data to said processor when the settlement points associated with said obtained identification data are more than said difference.

9. (Previously presented) The electronic settlement apparatus according to claim 22, wherein said memory stores conversion rate data representing a conversion rate between said discount points and settlement points, each settlement point representing a property value, and said processor specifies the amount of said settlement points corresponding to the discount points represented by

use point data that designates an amount to be appropriate for the price of said commodity according to the conversion rate represented by said conversion rate data.

10. (Previously presented) The electronic settlement apparatus according to claim 22, wherein said processor determines whether or not the price of said commodity represented by said commodity data reaches a predetermined minimum purchase amount, and decides that no discount point is assigned to said user when determining that the price of said commodity does not reach the predetermined minimum purchase amount.

11. (Previously presented) The electronic settlement apparatus according to claim 22, wherein said processor determines whether or not the discount points represented by use point data that designates an amount to be appropriate for the price of said commodity obtained by the processor are more than predetermined available points, and handles said available points as discount points.

12-14. Cancelled

15. (Previously presented) The electronic settlement apparatus according to claim 22, wherein said memory stores assignment rate data that designates discount points to be newly assigned to said user per unit quantity of the price of said commodity; and said processor decides a value obtained by multiplying the price of said commodity represented by said commodity data obtained by the processor by the discount points designated by said assignment rate data as discount points to be newly assigned to said user.

16. (Previously presented) The electronic settlement apparatus according to claim 22, wherein said commodity data includes point designation information that designates discount points to be assigned to a person who purchases said commodity represented by said commodity data; and said processor decides the discount points represented by said point designation information included in said commodity data obtained by said processor as discount points to be newly assigned to said user.

17-21. Cancelled

22. (Currently amended) An electronic settlement apparatus connected via a network to a remote terminal being operated by a buyer wishing to purchase a commodity, the electronic settlement apparatus comprising:

a memory for storing discount points representing a property value to be associated with a buyer to which said discount points are assigned;

a sending mechanism that generates a page and sends the generated page via the network to the remote terminal so that the remote terminal displays the sent generated page instructing the buyer to input commodity data designating a commodity that the buyer wishes to buy and discount data designating discount points the buyer wishes to use for buying the commodity;

a receiving mechanism that receives the commodity data and the discount data which are sent from the remote terminal, the commodity data and the discount data being input by the user at the remote terminal;

a determining mechanism that determines whether a seller, selling the commodity designated by the received commodity data, has specified a ~~[[n]] upper limit~~ maximum value of the discount points the buyer can use in one transaction;

determines, as the discount points to be used for buying the designated commodity, either one of the smaller of the discount points that is stored in the memory corresponding to the buyer and the discount points designated by an amount data received by the receiving mechanism when the seller has not specified the maximum value ~~upper limit~~, and

determines, as the discount points to be used for buying the designated commodity, a smallest one of the discount points that is stored in the discount memory corresponding to the buyer, the discount points designated by the amount data received by the receiving mechanism, and the specified maximum value ~~upper limit~~ discount points, when the seller has specified the maximum value ~~upper limit~~;

an assigning mechanism that determines discount points to be newly assigned to the buyer based on the price of the commodity designated by the commodity data received by the receiving mechanism, and the discount points determined by the determining mechanism; and

an update mechanism which updates the discount points stored in the memory of the buyer by a sum of an originally stored discount points and any newly assigned discount points subtracted by the discount points to be used as determined by the determining means when receiving settlement data representing an end of the settlement of the transaction of the commodity between the seller and the buyer.

23. (Currently amended) An electronic settlement apparatus connected via a network to a remote terminal being operated by a buyer wishing to purchase a commodity, the electronic settlement apparatus comprising:

a memory for storing discount points representing a property value to be associated with a buyer to which said discount points are assigned;

a sending mechanism that generates a page and sends the generated page via the network to the remote terminal so that the remote terminal displays the sent generated page instructing the buyer to input commodity data designating a commodity that the buyer wishes to buy and discount data designating discount points the buyer wishes to use for buying the commodity;

a receiving mechanism that receives the commodity data and the discount data which are sent from the remote terminal, the commodity data and the discount data being input by the user at the remote terminal;

a determining mechanism that determines whether a seller, selling the commodity designated by the received commodity data, has specified a ~~[[n]] upper-limit~~ maximum value of the discount points the buyer can use in one transaction;

determines, as the discount points to be used for buying the designated commodity, either one of ~~[[a]] the~~ smaller of the discount points that is stored in the memory corresponding to the buyer and the discount points designated by an amount data received by the receiving mechanism when the seller has not specified the ~~upper-limit~~ [[.]] maximum value; and

determines, as the discount points to be used for buying the designated commodity, a smallest one of the discount points which is stored in the discount memory corresponding to the buyer, the discount points designated by the amount data received by the receiving mechanism, and the specified ~~upper-limit~~ maximum value discount points, when the seller has specified the ~~upper-limit~~ maximum value;

an assigning mechanism that determines discount points to be newly assigned to the buyer based on the price of the commodity designated by the commodity data received by the receiving means, and the discount points determined by the determining means; and

an update mechanism which updates the discount points stored in the memory of the buyer by a sum of an originally stored discount points and any newly assigned discount points $[[-]]$ subtracted by the discount points to be used as determined by the determining means when receiving settlement data representing an end of the settlement of the transaction of the commodity between the seller and the buyer.